

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 14, 2010

Larry Strickling
Administrator
National Telecommunications &
Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dallas Tonsager
Under Secretary
Rural Development
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Strickling & Mr. Tonsager:

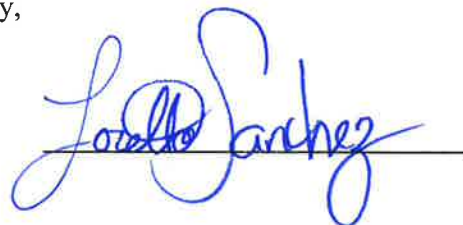
We are writing today regarding California's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Broadband Applications for Round Two. We appreciate that during Round One California was awarded 8 grants from the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), and received broadband mapping funds. However, California did not receive any funding from the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP), overseen by the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS). We write today to request that you give due consideration to California's grant requests in Round Two.

As you know, ARRA included \$4.7 billion for competitive BTOP grants and \$2.5 billion for broadband grant, loan, and loan/grant combination programs administered by RUS. The funds are to be used for projects that help bridge the technological divide, boost economic growth, create jobs, and improve education and healthcare.

While California's broadband coverage rate is 96 percent, the remaining 4 percent includes more than 1.4 million people living in rural areas covering a total of 44,000 square miles, roughly the size of Kentucky. According to the Federal Communication Commission, 14 million people nationwide are without broadband access, which means that roughly 10% of Americans who are unserved are in California.

The list of California's "highly recommended" and "recommended" BTOP Round Two projects set forth by the Governor of California, as well as the pending BIP applications, highlight the needs of California's unserved and underserved areas as well as the strength of ideas and collaborative nature of those applying for Round Two funds. We, therefore, urge you to give full and fair consideration to California's Round Two grant applications, which will go a long way towards improving economic and educational opportunities in the state.

Sincerely,

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~~Mae~~ G. Shoo

Doris O. Matsui

Joy M. Ny
Fin Int

Lois Cupps

Widely M. Hark

Laura B. Cluck

Howard L. Berman

George Miller

Luella Kopfel-Alward

Bob Filner

Harry A. Wapner

Jan Ham

John M. Mundy

Barton Lee

Joe Barr

BTOP/BIP Letter Sign on

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